



For Immediate Release:
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THE ROAD IS CHANGING ITS STRIPES WATKINSVILLE BYPASS WILL IMPROVE FLOW

Buford, GA – The road is changing its stripes. The Georgia Department of Transportation is working to improve traffic flow from the Watkinsville Bypass/Highway 15 south to Highway 24/Macon Highway.

“Currently there are two left turn lanes from the Watkinsville Bypass south onto Highway 24/Macon Highway. We are removing the outside left turn lane, leaving one left turn lane with a flashing yellow arrow to control left turn traffic. This will greatly improve the flow of traffic along the bypass and allow left turners to go onto Macon Highway after yielding to traffic” explained Brent Cook, Georgia DOT District Engineer serving Oconee County.

The striping and traffic signal changes will be made this tomorrow. Please slow down as everyone gets used to these changes.

The new traffic lights are called Four-Section Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA) signals that will be deployed at intersections with historic heavy left-turning traffic volumes. The FYA signals will apply exclusively to drivers making left turns. The signal will be a vertical display of four left turn arrows functioning as follows (and displayed in the attachment):

- When solid **Red** arrow is illuminated, no left turn is allowed;
- When solid **Yellow** arrow is displayed, drivers should prepare to stop as light is about to turn red;
- When flashing **Yellow** arrow is illuminated, drivers may turn left but must yield to pedestrians and oncoming vehicles; and
- When solid **Green** arrow is displayed, drivers may turn left.

Federal Highway Administration studies have shown these signals help reduce crashes of left-turning vehicles by as much as 35 percent. The FYA also offers clearer guidance to drivers turning left and allows them more movement through the intersection when no pedestrians or oncoming traffic are present, thereby reducing back-ups, engine idling and auto emissions.

“We believe this will help drivers wanting to make a left turn better understand when they can do so freely, when they may proceed with their turn cautiously, and when they may not turn left,” Cook said. “Our primary purpose is to reduce the often-devastating angle crashes that result when a left-turning vehicle is struck by oncoming traffic.”

FYA will now be Georgia DOT’s preferred left turn traffic signal for eligible locations – those with high numbers of left-turn movements and resultant traffic back-ups and related accidents. In addition to the Georgia DOT locations, cities and counties throughout the state will identify eligible locations and apply to the Department for permits for the new traffic signals.

During heavy traffic volume the traffic signal may skip the flashing yellow phase to increase safety at the intersection. It is important that drivers not try to anticipate what the traffic signal is about to do; just “drive and obey the signal.”

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If the traffic signal has a malfunction the left turn will flash red. As with all signalized intersections, a flashing red is treated as a stop condition and flashing yellow is treated as proceed with caution. If all indications at an intersection are flashing red or the intersection is dark it should be treated as a four-way stop.

DriveAlert ArriveAlive calls attention to an alarming increase in roadway fatalities across Georgia, many resulting from preventable crashes and distracted driving. **DriveAlert ArriveAlive** implores motorists to buckle up; stay off the phone and no texting; and drive alert. Visit www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA. #ArriveAliveGA For more information about Georgia DOT, visit www.dot.ga.gov or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/GDOTNE) (<https://www.facebook.com/GDOTNE>) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/GDOTNE) (<https://twitter.com/GDOTNE>).

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STEADY RED ARROW

Stop and Wait

STEADY YELLOW ARROW

Prepare to Stop

FLASHING YELLOW ARROW

Yield to Pedestrians & On-Coming Traffic

STEADY GREEN ARROW

Proceed with Left Turn